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NOAA RELEASES DETAILED MAPS OF CORAL REEFS IN THE MAIN HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

A new Web site is now available from NOAA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, that provides digital baseline information about the location and distribution of shallow-water seafloor habitats, maps, and imagery of the main Hawaiian Islands. The Benthic Habitats of the Main Hawaiian Islands Web site supports management, research, and conservation of critical resources in Hawaii. [NOAA](#) is an agency of the Department of Commerce.

Developed through a partnership between NOAA National Ocean Service ([NOAA Oceans and Coasts](#)), [NOAA Fisheries](#), the state of [Hawaii's Department of Land and Natural Resources](#) and the [University of Hawaii's Institute of Marine Biology](#), this Web site: http://biogeo.nos.noaa.gov/products/hawaii_cd/startup.htm, provides highly detailed images of seafloor habitats of the eight main Hawaiian Islands.

Scientists were able to produce these highly detailed maps using aerial photography and hyperspectral imaging. Hyperspectral imaging is an improved way of taking images of the seafloor from an aircraft, which helps to distinguish features based on their color. Readers will be able to identify sand from mud or corals from other seafloor habitats just by looking at its color.

NOAA anticipates that the remaining shallow water features will be mapped by 2006 and updates will be made available via the NOAA Web site. NOAA is investigating the use of more resolved mapping scales, improved mapping methodologies, and more vigorous classification schemes for ongoing mapping of the main Hawaiian Islands.

This is the third set of major coral reef ecosystem maps produced with support from NOAA Oceans and Coasts' Coral Reef Conservation Program. The coral reef ecosystem maps are a result of efforts by many federal, state, academic, and private sector partners. Completion of this project represents a major milestone towards completion of the [U.S. Coral Reef Task Force's](#) recommendation to develop shallow-water coral reef ecosystem maps for all U.S. waters by 2007.

To request a copy of the main Hawaiian Islands cd-rom and methods manual, please register online at: http://biogeo.nos.noaa.gov/products/hawaii_cd/order.shtml

For additional information on NOAA National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science's Biogeography Program habitat mapping products contact Mr. Timothy A. Battista at 301-713-3028 - extension 171, or by email at Tim.Battista@noaa.gov.

NOAA Oceans and Coasts is dedicated to exploring, understanding, conserving and restoring the nation's coasts and oceans. NOAA Ocean and Coasts balances environmental protection with economic prosperity in fulfilling its mission of promoting safe navigation, supporting coastal communities, sustaining coastal habitats, and mitigating coastal hazards.

The [Commerce Department's](#) National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ([NOAA](#)) is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources.

On the Web:

NOAA: <http://www.noaa.gov>

The Benthic Habitats of the Main Hawaiian Islands:
http://biogeo.nos.noaa.gov/products/hawaii_cd/startup.htm

NOAA Oceans and Coasts: <http://www.nos.noaa.gov>

U.S. Coral Reef Task Force: <http://coralreef.gov>